The Sketch

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IN A GOTHIC FRAME.

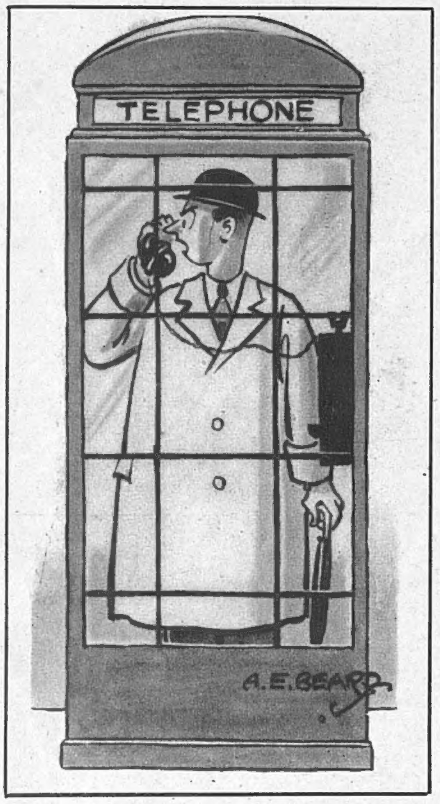
Through a window in the porch of her fine old Berkshire farmhouse MRS. ALEC HAMBRO *and six-year-old* ROSAMUND *were photographed by brother Cecil Beaton. Her husband, in the Reconnaissance Corps, was killed in North Africa. Mrs. Hambro has another daughter, aged ten. Her elder sister is Lady Smiley.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY CECIL BEATON.

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Jezebel and Co. I am weary of wicked women. This is not the beginning of a poem of the Neo-Decadent School; it is just the heart-cry of one who is persecuted by ferocious females. Wherever I turn in film or fiction I find these appalling Jezebels steeping their hands in gore. The things they do make my blood run cold. Mostly it is poison. They poison off their husbands like rats in the cellar or wasps in the garden. There was a very popular one in a recent film who disposed of her young because they diverted attention from her charming self, and now I see there is another on the stage who suffocates everybody else's children because she hasn't any of her own. There is a girl called Bedelia, and it is as much as any man's life is worth to take a cup of tea with her. Besides these Borgias, there are the wives who bump off, or help to bump off, their husbands in the most fiendish manner because they happen to take a fancy to somebody else, or to the insurance money. I was sorry when Barbara Stanwyck took to that game, and now I see that Lana Turner is at it.



"Oh, operator! What is that number one dials when one sees an armed bandit attempting to escape in an obviously stolen car after shooting two police-constables, please?"

DRAWN BY A. E. BEARDS.

We Have Changed All That. Undoubtedly the prevailing fashion in womanhood is toughness. It looks as if we are in for a whole series of Two-gun Girls and gangster's molls, and now I see there are to be female Dicks and Bulls too. How different it was of yore! To Dickens and all his generation there were only two kinds of women—the Pure and Good, and the Fallen or Abandoned. You wreathed haloes round the former and you modestly turned your eyes away from the latter. I suppose the twentieth century suffers from the usual swing of the pendulum. I could name contemporary novelists (but I won't) who seem incapable of imagining an ordinary flesh-and-blood—or, rather, flesh-and-spirit—woman. Their feminine characters are either monsters of viciousness, or else, just when you think they are going to behave like normal, decent creatures, you find that their apparent decency is merely a cloak for abysmal falsity and depravity. I consider this very unjust. In my opinion, there is a spark of good even in the most womanly woman. Besides, all this is just as absurdly untrue to real life as the Earthly Angels of Victorian fiction. It really does not need much psychological insight to know that, morally speaking, women are like the rest of humanity—neither black nor white, but streaky.

Monstrous Regiment. Am I getting strait-laced in my declining years, or is there not something rather unhealthy in this Monstrous Regiment of Women? Despite the excellent acting, a film like "Double Indemnity" left me with a dominant feeling of revulsion. There seemed to me to be nothing to redeem the story from utter sordidness, and though it certainly interested me, I suspected that my interest was morbid. "Pity and terror" can, of course, lift the most bloody crime to a high level of art (after all, Macbeth was a bit of a bumper-off!), but I found little pity and terror here. I have not seen "The Postman Always Rings Twice," but I have read that very tough book, and its brutality, for me, counteracts its undoubted power. Of course, the bad 'uns always come to a bad end, but they get a great deal of unhealthy green limelight on the way. I don't want the old-fashioned Pure and Goods—I prefer human nature's daily food—but give me, I say, a real woman of this earth, with the strengths and weaknesses thereof—a woman, for example, like Miss Celia Johnson in "Brief Encounter," and I will go far to see such supreme film architecture and such superb acting.

The Arena. I will not go equally far (I hereby give notice) to see a football match. It seems to be a dangerous way of spending one's time nowadays. A panic-stricken crowd is a creature of nightmare, and I do not wish to dwell on a recent horrible accident, except to say that there were two features of it almost more depressing than the casualties. One was that a number of persons rushed to the stricken scene to collect souvenirs; and the other was the howling of the gutter-Press against a man who, in an agonising situation, and solely to prevent worse happening, took the courageous, if unpalatable, decision to continue play. But, apart from quite exceptional incidents, football seems to be altogether too lively a game for ordinary taste. I see that a spectator has been killed by falling from the roof of a stand which collapsed; and that two teams played in hot weather for 3¾ hours, being all nearly dead at the finish. At another match a touch judge raised his flag mistakenly, and a minute later was being treated by ambulance men for a broken jaw, instantly delivered by one of the more enthusiastic spectators. A picture of the bandaged victim lies before me, and it gives me to think. At another place the crowd were instructed by police loud-speakers in "arms drill"—"hands up, hands down"—to prevent them squashing each other to death.

" She flitted into the ballroom. . ." [DRAWN BY J. E. BROOME.]

The Wet Bobs.

No, that is not my sort of quiet, healthful Saturday afternoon. I prefer to

stick to tiddlywinks, which I see has been brought into prominence as an athletic sport by Oxford and Cambridge. It is not, however, the only manly sport in which they engage. They are a little more strenuous on the Thames, and the whole of London (entertainment tax or no entertainment tax) turns out to see how strenuous they are. This has always puzzled me greatly. Why should the entire British nation divide itself into two camps about two universities of which only a fraction know or care anything ? It may be that Dark Blue and Light Blue are like Swift's Big Enders and Little Enders—those who cut off the top or the bottom of the egg—and that almost anything is a good enough pretext for partisanship. But I think there is more than that. This is a carnival of youth and vigour, though I doubt whether the crews would consider it exactly " Youth at the prow and Pleasure at the helm." More important, it is pure amateurism, and we are said to be a nation of amateurs. Anyhow, the crowds of " fans " do not seem to diminish either in numbers or in enthusiasm as the years go by, and it is some satisfaction, in view of recent events, that they have not yet jostled each other in hundreds to a watery grave, or been paraded for arms drill or served out with water-wings, or (so far as I am informed, but you never know) treated to and for broken jaws.

A Little Reconstruction. One would have thought that there had been enough smashing—and grabbing, for that matter—in the world lately without smashing jaws which, for all one knows, may be quite useful to their owners. Even the heroes of the past have been knocked about a bit—a far bigger bit than Cromwell ever attempted in his more athletic moments. It brings war home to you when Lion-Hearted Richard's sword is knocked all skew-whiff in his hand. I see that those extraordinary bird-men, the steeplejacks, are even giving Nelson a wash and brush-up. Well, they couldn't knock *him* skew-whiff, though he stood up there for six years defying them to register a hit. If they had done so, I suspect that the lions down below might have become excited. As it was, they never moved a muscle throughout the whole war—never lashed or even wagged their tails. Remarkable animals ! Looking at those tails, I have an impression that any who still wish, as some seem to wish, to try games with them may find them very difficult to twist.

" People are getting a bit touchy about rations. . . . better make it two ounces ! "

DRAWN BY BOWES.

The Dope. It is right that Governments should straighten bent swords and clean up statuesque heroes, but not everything is quite so easy to straighten out or to wash up (or out). When a Minister of the Crown says, even in so vital a matter as our daily bread, that " a regrettable mistake has been made " and apologises for it, the natural tendency of the British Parliament and public is to accept this apology in the spirit in which it is made and say no more about it. But it is legitimate to ask how mistakes so unfortunate come to be made in such important matters ; and I suggest one cause which is now common to all Ministries and which may be a source of endless confusion unless it is checked. It is, briefly, Gossip—or " dope," or hand-outs, or " stories." How many of the free and independent electors know about the activities of the army of P.R.O.s, *alias* Public Relations Officers, *alias* publicity-merchants for bureaucrats ? Very few, I think ; and still fewer realise that what a Government intends, and what P.R.O.s spread through Fleet Street, may be two very different things which end in hopeless contradiction. Sweet are the uses of advertisement—but when they go sour, they may be very sour.

" Surely that doesn't apply to *regular* passengers ? " [DRAWN BY SILENUS.]

To Be or Not To Be ?

There are other and better

[*Continued overleaf.*

The one-hundred-and-thirty-ninth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of " The Sketch " is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

sweets, and the burning question is whether they are rationed or not. For instance, toffee-apples. Take a weazened windfall, encase it in a thin crust of burned sugar or treacle, impale it on a stick, and sell it for a shilling. It has always seemed to me a very dreary form of confectionery, but the public thinks otherwise, and apparently you can sell a barrow-load of it in ten minutes and lay the foundations of a fortune. But is it confectionery at all—a crime if sold " without surrender of coupons " ? A nice point on points ! Is a pill a lollipop ? Said his Worship : " If you sell cascara pills with sugar coating, do you require the surrender of points ? " May it please your Lordship, you can search me ! All I know is that the best toffee-apple in the world was never worth a shilling of anybody's money ; but the world is full of mugs with shillings burning holes in their pockets. The problem remains—is a toffee-apple an apple or is it toffee ? It all depends on what you mean——now, where have I heard that before ?

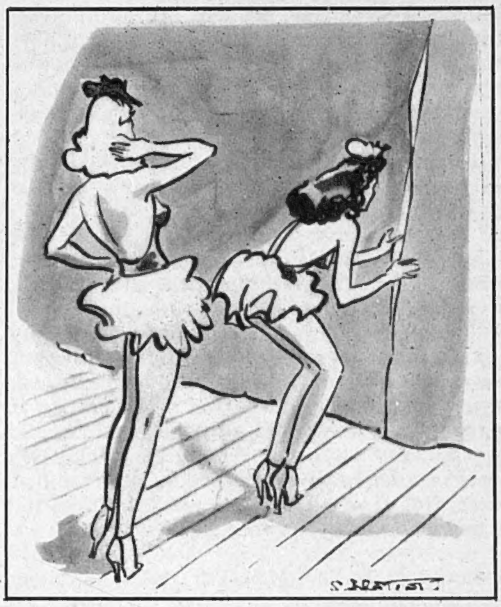
The " A " Tap. The fact is—and I claim no world copyright in the observation—that, what with toffee-apples and one thing and another, the world is full of worries. A worry of an entirely new and alarming kind happened the other night

" I suppose it would spoil your game if I were to *tell* you where it is ? " [DRAWN BY PAT AULD.]

to a friend of mine. Fortunately, it happened only in a dream, but it deserves to go on record, for it may be an omen for the Brave New World. My friend was engaging a parlourmaid. (It does not need a course in Viennese psychology to guess that the subject was somewhat dominant in her waking thoughts.) The first question put in cross-examination by Doreen (or Vyvyenne, as the case may be) was : " Have you an adequate supply of atomic energy in the house ? " Yes, that was all right ; she was taken immediately to the bath-room and shown that, besides the H. and C. taps, there was a tap marked A. All now seemed well, and Vyvyenne engaged her mistress without further ado. But then came the awful thought, mounting to nightmare—suppose she turns that A tap on full, *what will happen* ? My friend woke up screaming. I have noticed a certain haunted look about her since.

. . . Would Smell as Sweet. And, since we are gossiping so idly, I am reminded of another maid, of an older and now extinct school. When she was engaged, it was explained to her that it was the custom of the house to call the staff by their surnames. She showed deep agitation and begged that an exception should be made in her case. Pressed for a reason, she said, with acute embarrassment, that her name was unfortunately not fit for the lips of any lady or gentleman. Dreadful apprehensions crowded the mistress's mind, but she thought she had better know the worst, and at last the terrible truth was extracted. The name was Bosomworthy. It was decided to call her Jones.

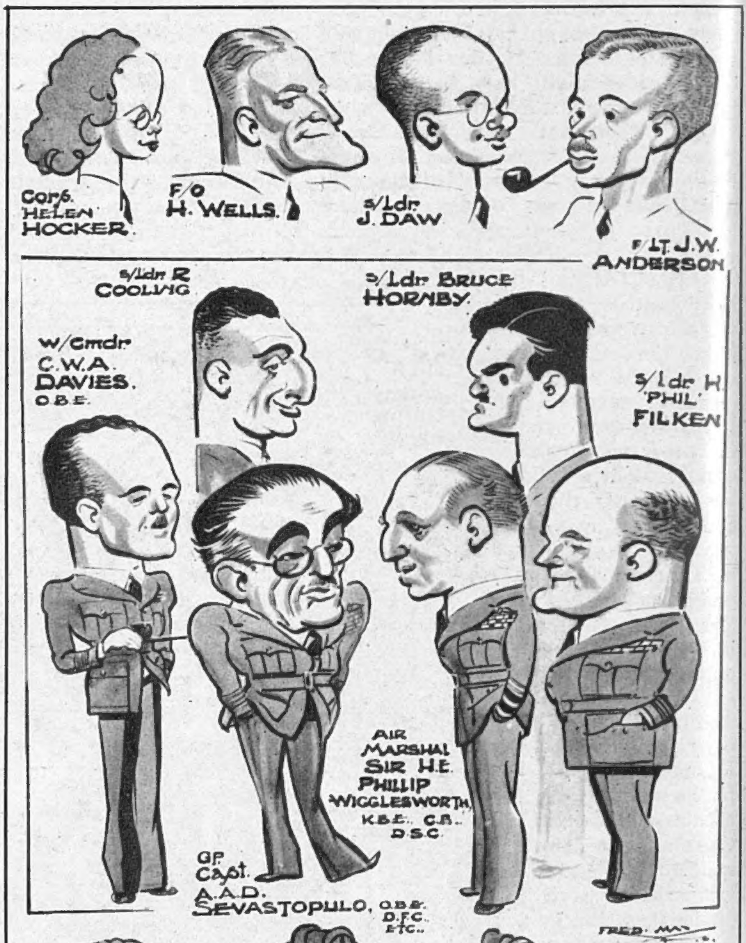
Wonderful World. The world came to an end again on March 25, owing to the peculiar behaviour of Saturn, at Dinkelsbuhl, near Nuremberg. Another cruel fraud on the public ! —48,000 Service men are waiting for divorces. Would it not be simpler to solemnize the divorce before the marriage was made



" Jean said the place was half-empty . . . why, it's half-full now ! " [DRAWN BY S. L. BRETTELL.]

absolute ?—There was a riot at Lucknow because a political party found that a corner of its flag had been torn off. They were just about to join battle with the rival faction when a monkey ran up the pole and tore off another corner. If the two parties are wise, they will now join forces and elect the monkey as President.—A chap in Cheshire has won £3025 17s. 10d. on a twopenny " investment " in a football pool. Yes, I know—it 's always somebody up in Cheshire—but keep on trying !

They Know All the Answers. " His Lordship said that queues had become a very common sight." This is what is known in legal language as " taking judicial notice."



Following VE-Day, the reorganisation and renaming of S.H.A.E.F. Headquarters became necessary; and it resolved itself into B.A.F.O. (British Air Forces Overseas). Here we have the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Air Marshal Sir H. E. Philip Wigglesworth, with some of his Staff officers, who continue the good work of more hectic days. [CARICATURES BY FRED MAY.]

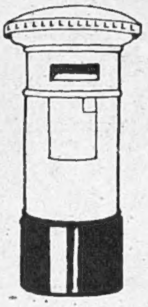
GO ON SAVING PAPER : IT IS STILL ESSENTIAL.

A GRIEVOUS LOSS TO JOURNALISM AND THE HOSPITALS.

The sudden death of VISCOUNT SOUTHWOOD, *first Baron, first Viscount, the distinguished newspaper proprietor and publisher, and Chairman and Managing Director of The Illustrated London News and Sketch, Illustrated Newspapers, Odham's Press, and many other important newspapers and periodicals, is not only a great loss to journalism but to the hospitals. Lord Southwood was one of the most tireless and energetic supporters of every form of work for the relief of human suffering. His Red Cross Penny-a-Week Fund was the backbone of the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St. John wartime appeal, and raised £17,500,000; while he himself has raised nearly £20,000,000 for charity. He undertook active work to help many hospitals, and under his chairmanship the Hospital for Sick Children was freed from debt. He was the son of a Whitby jet salesman, and took his first job—that of an errand boy—when thirteen. He built up his fortune and his great position by his own efforts, and he was one of the most sympathetic and human of employers. He will be mourned by many. During the latter part of the war he sat on the front bench of Labour peers, frequently acting as deputy speaker.*

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—I have been to a Party, and when I say Party I don't mean going down to Faith's for a drink and meeting the Savernacks, but the sort of Party where a Butler shouts out your name at the top of his voice. Needless to say, it did not take place in this village; not even in our Cathedral City, but in another and much more exciting city, where you go out to buy a stamp and turn the corner, and there, in all their beauty, are Ships. At night you hear them hooting, Hoo-hoo, like giant owls, as they steal away in the darkness.

But I expect you are wondering how I came to be asked to such a grand Party, and the answer is that I really don't know, except that Thomas and James and Henry are kind young men and knew it was the sort of Party I would enjoy. They gave it, and they not only asked me to it, but asked me to stay with them for it.

"Lady B. and Faith stared at me with worried frowns."

When I got their letter I said to Charles, "Thomas and James and Henry are giving a Party, and they 've asked me to go to it."

"How very kind of them," said Charles.

"They 've asked me to stay the night."

"How very, *very* kind of them," said Lady B.

"I suppose it 's all right going and staying with bachelors?"

"My dear Henrietta," said Faith, "at your age *everything* is all right," which made me feel a bit bleak, because no woman likes to be thought as safe as all that, even if she is.

Of course, Lady B. and Faith at once began worrying about what I was to wear, and Faith remarked, not for the first time, that my black dinner-dress was the only decent garment in my wardrobe.

"Thomas says short frocks in his letter."

"Then you must wear your French flowered silk," said Lady B.; "it 's pre-war, but we can't help that."—"She can't wear that," said Faith, "her arms are too thin," and she and Lady B. stared at me with worried frowns.

"I shall wear my dark blue," I said, and when Lady B. and Faith looked at me blankly I said, "My Neevy, then, if you want it put into shop language."

"You can't wear that!" said Lady B. and Faith together, as they always do whenever I suggest wearing anything.

"I can and I will," I said. "It 's warm. I shan't enjoy myself if I feel cold."

"You 'll look like a Lady Detective," said Faith.

"I don't mind if I do," I said. "That 's the best of going to a party where nobody knows you, and I dare say Thomas and James and Henry will be quite glad to have their guests think they have taken the trouble to provide a Lady Detective." After that Faith and Lady B. said they gave up.

Thomas met me at the station looking white and strained. "This Party is going to be a ghastly failure," he said. I said that when you felt like that beforehand it always meant that it was going to be a howling success, but Thomas remained gloomy and full of forebodings about people not Mixing.

"I 'm prepared to Mix like anything," I said.

"It 's very good of you, Henrietta," said Thomas, without any marked enthusiasm, and added that he had now reached the stage where aspirins only excited him.

We found James and Henry also looking white and strained, but all the preparations were so complete I couldn't see that they had anything to worry about. It 's when you see your guests coming up the garden-path while you are still doing the flowers that you have to panic. I changed into my Neevy. Thomas and James and Henry said I didn't look in the least like a Lady Detective, and I set out for the Theatre greatly cheered by their kind words. I forgot to tell you that the Theatre was part of the treat—in fact, the Party was being given in honour of a celebrated company of actors and actresses. Thomas and James and Henry didn't come, but remained at home, twittering with nerves and trying to read books. I arrived back in an elated condition induced by an exquisite theatre and beautiful acting, and as soon as I got in at the door I knew the Party was being a howling success. "What name, Madam?" said the Butler, bending towards me with an expression as benevolent as a Confirming Bishop's.

"Mrs. Browne," I said proudly, for it is years and years since I was announced at a party. "Mrs. Browne!" boomed the Butler, and I sailed in with all the confidence of somebody who knows nobody in the room but her hosts and shook hands with Thomas, who was handing round cocktails and looking quite happy and like himself again.

"Why have yourself announced in that ridiculous way?" said Thomas.

"I thought it would be fun. I say, Thomas, it *is* being a howling success."

And so it was. People were Mixing like the very dickens and were engaged in absorbing nose-to-nose conversations with each other. Even when the Butler announced Supper and everybody was swept into another room, they went on talking and had to be forcibly rent asunder and introduced to other people, whereupon they at once started another nose-to-noser. Thomas and James and Henry moved calmly and happily among their guests, and delicious food and drink were handed round by the Butler and attendant acolytes. I found myself talking to a young man who said he had been all the evening teaching boys to sing "The Revenge," a work I know well and am fond of, so I sang him a bar or two and then he sang me a bar or two, and the time passed very pleasantly until I looked up and saw "That Dan," Faith's ex-Young Man, staring at me across the room.

"Trying to read books."

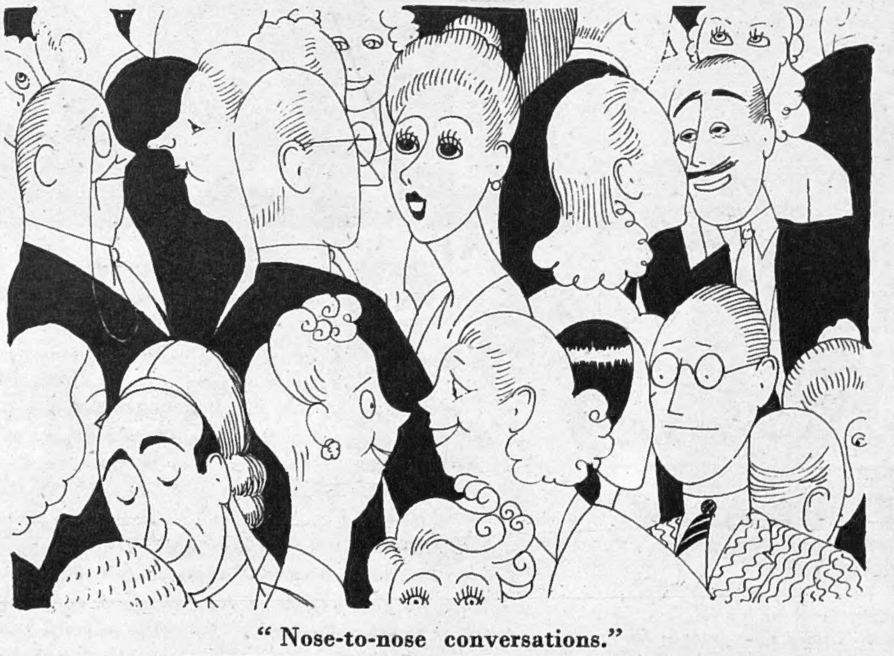
He fought his way to my side and said, "Hullo, Henrietta."

"Hullo, Dan," I said, "what are you doing here?"

"*I* was *asked*," said That Dan rather unkindly. "I 've been looking at you for a long time, Henrietta, wondering and wondering where I had seen you before, and I came to the conclusion that you must be a Lady Detective."

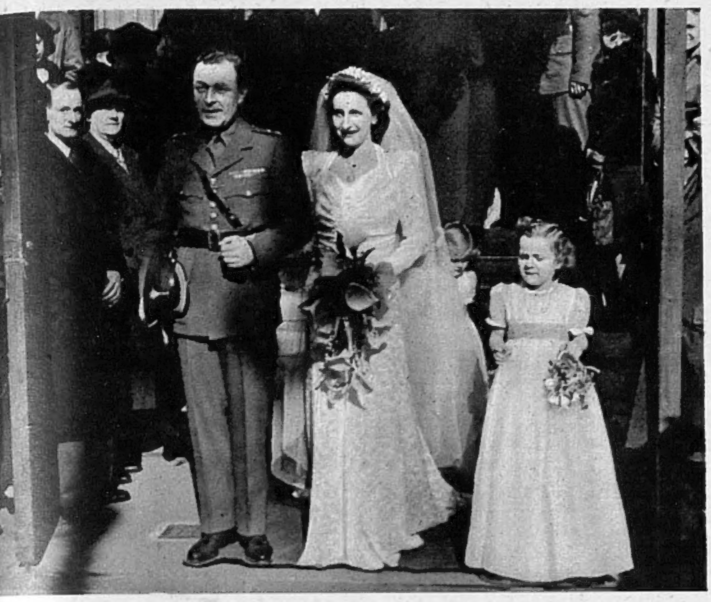
"Dan!" I cried, and looked down in horror at my Neevy. Then I saw the twinkle in his eye, and knew that Faith must have written and told him to say that to me. Shortly afterwards somebody spilt some trifle down his trousers, and I couldn't help feeling rather pleased.

Always your affectionate
Childhood's Friend,
HENRIETTA.



"Nose-to-nose conversations."

Owing to unavoidable circumstances our "We Take Off Our Hat to—" page is omitted in this issue.



The marriage of LIEUT.-COLONEL R. C. ROSE PRICE, *Welsh Guards, elder son of Brig.-General and Mrs. T. Rose Price, to the* HON. MAUREEN BUTLER, *second daughter of the late Lord Dunboyne and of Lady Dunboyne, took place at St. Mark's, North Audley Street.*

MR. ANTHONY JAMES, *late of the Rifle Brigade, son of Captain and Mrs. P. E. R. James, of Fresco House, Rye, married* MISS JOSEPHINE YOUNG, *daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. V. Young, of the Knowle, Friday Street, at Westham Church, Pevensey.*

WEDDINGS AT WINDSOR, IN LONDON AND IN SUSSEX.

The marriage of LIEUT.-COLONEL JACK PRICE, *9th Lancers, of Rhiwlas, Pala, Merioneth, son of the late Capt. Robin Price, to* MISS JULIET HERMIONE SLESSOR, *daughter of Air Chief-Marshal Sir John Slessor, took place at St. Peter's, Eaton Square.*

The marriage of SIR MARK DALRYMPLE, BT., *of Newhailes, Musselburgh, Midlothian, to* LADY ANTONIA STEWART, *only daughter of the Earl and Countess of Galloway, took place at St. Margaret's, Westminster.*

This charming snapshot of a smiling bride and bridegroom shows MAJOR *and* MRS. EDWARD W. RENTON *driving away from St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in a royal open landau after their wedding.*

The marriage of MAJOR EDWARD W. RENTON, *the Black Watch, to* MISS LAVINIA JOAN LASCELLES, *elder daughter of Sir Alan and the Hon. Lady Lascelles, was attended by the King and Queen, the Princesses, Queen Mary and the Princess Royal.*

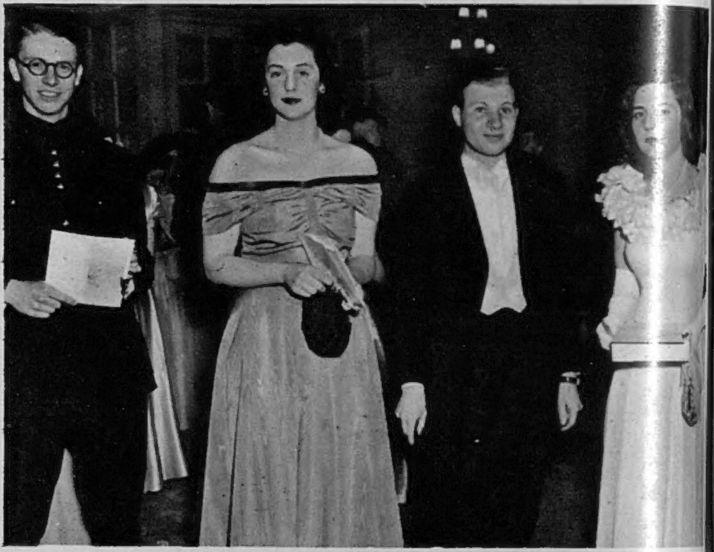
QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S BALL

Dogs as well as dog-lovers came to the Dumb Friends League Committee Meeting for the Animals' Welfare Dinner Dance fixed for April 10. Here are Sir Pelham Warner's Simon, Mrs. Calvert Empson's Cirque, and Mrs. C. Porter's Jeep

MR. J. BONHAM KIDSTON, *of Hazelbury Manor, Box, married the* HON. PATRICIA MANNERS, *daughter of Lord and Lady Manners, at St. Michael's and All Angels', Sopley, Hants.*

MLLE. SOLANGE SCHWARZ *is a prima ballerina of the Ballets des Champs-Elysées who are giving a season at the Adelphi. She is seen in " Concert de Danses," new ballet to themes of Mozart and Tchaikovsky.* [PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRÉ OSTIER.]

The Second Half of Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball at Grosvenor House was attended by a huge concourse of 1946 débutantes and their partners. Here's a general view of the ballroom, with the famous cake in the foreground.



MR. A. C. B. MILLAR, MISS BABETTE FALCK, BARON C. ROTH *and* MISS PETRONELLA ELLIOT *attended Queen Charlotte's Ball (Second Half) at Grosvenor House.*

CAPTAIN PHILIP BRIANT *and* MISS MAUREEN MILLAR *were guests at the Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball (Second Half). Her shirred chiffon dress was cut with sleeves and full décolletage.*

AND OTHER NOTABLE EVENTS.

OLONEL DUNDAS HAMILTON, MISS JEAN KING, LIEUT. CLINTON BAKER, R.N., ISS HAZEL PETERSON, MISS BETTY LEVER *and* LIEUT. JOHN LUCAS, R.N.V.R. *are (l. to r.) round this table at Queen Charlotte's Ball.*

Lovely Cottage, with CAPTAIN R. PETRE *up, won the Grand National at Aintree by four lengths, from Jack Finlay, with Prince Regent third, after starting at 25 to 1. Lovely Cottage is owned by Mr. J. Morant, and trained by Tom Rayson.*

MISS LEE HSIEN MING *(Mme. Tcherepnine) and* MISS CHOW SHIAO-YEN *(soprano) played and sang modern Chinese Music at the reception given by the Chinese Ambassador at the Whitehall.* M. TCHEREPNINE, *the Russian composer, husband of Miss Lee Hsien Ming, is with them.*

MISS GEORGETTE DE HART, MR. JOHN BEVAN *and* MISS JUNE LLOYD *were photographed at Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball. Miss de Hart wore a picture frock of chiffon.*

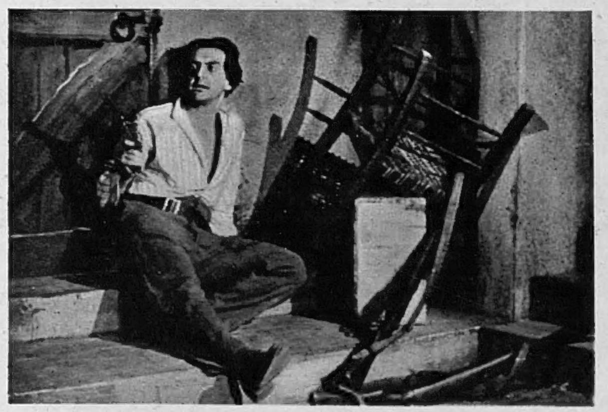
MR. WILLIAM FAIRHOLNE *with* MISS VIRGINIA HUTCHISON *at the Queen Charlotte's Ball (Second Half). Her dress was trimmed with lace round the square décolletage.*

LORD BUCKHURST, *son of Earl and Countess de la Warr, is engaged to* MISS ANNE DEVAS, *daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Devas, of Hunton Court, Maidstone. Both are politically-minded, active young Conservatives.*

STAGE CAMEOS.

By JOHN RUSSELL.

MR. FREDERICK VALK'S "OTHELLO" came as a refreshing and heartening excitement in some of the darkest and heaviest days of the war, and Mr. Donald Wolfit has earned our gratitude by recalling Mr. Valk's monumental bogey-man to the London stage. This Moor comes trumpeting across the scene like the whole host of Hannibal's elephants; and when the hired vitality of Africa is pitted against the intellectual arts of Europe, and the great leader of men gives place to the affronted husband, Mr. Valk gives us, as so few English actors can do, the full measure of the fall. Where Mr. Bernard Miles gave us a brilliantly conversational Iago, an intellectual on the loose, Mr. Wolfit stresses the clash of two equally massive wills; cogitation is never this brave actor's *forte*, but in Mr. Valk he has a fellow-master of the picturesque style, and their combat is worth taking trouble to see.



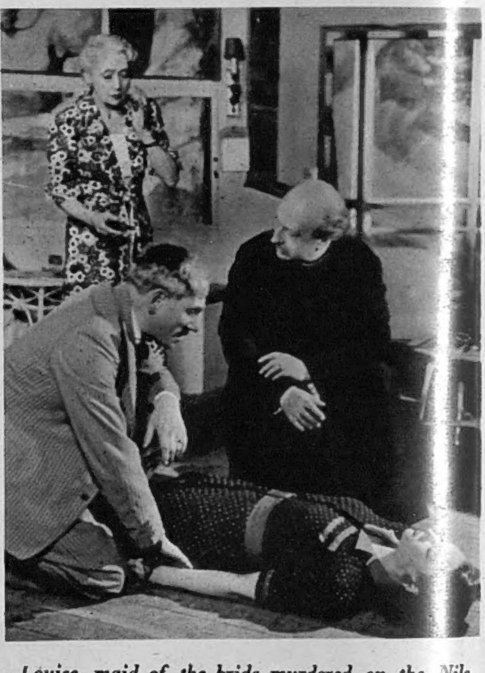
"The Wise Have Not Spoken" (King's Theatre, Hammersmith) is a play of ideologies. BASIL C. LANGTON *plays Francis McElroy, Communist, wounded on the barricades in Spain, prepared to die for his remote Irish farm which the broker's men are sent to seize. Here he lives with a brother and two sisters. Renée Asherson, Sir Lewis Casson, Alan Judd and Ann Casson are in the excellent cast of the T.R.T.*

The Scala Theatre (worth visiting in itself, as an architectural curiosity) has for the third of its progressive, nudgingly thoughtful plays Mr. B. L. Coombes' "FACE OF COAL," done into rough dramatic shape by Mr. Jack Lindsay. Few London playgoers can know much about coal-mining, and most of us thrust the subject thankfully out of sight until some momentary discomfort serves to remind of the hideous occupation by which so many people are understandably refusing to live. "Face of Coal" is like a snapshot album of unpalatable facts—but one whose pages are flicked through at a good pace and enlivened with a commentary in which strong feeling does not exclude humour.

Among so much that is trivial or underdone, the pleasures of expectation still hold good, and this summer offers many reasons for looking forward. In the sphere of international relations, a season of Swedish opera at Covent Garden and a visit from the Abbey Theatre of Dublin; and at home, the notable production with Mr. John Gielgud appearing as Raskolnikov in Mr. Ackland's adaptation of Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment." This novel, which has already given rise to one of the greatest of all films (with Jean-Louis Barrault and Harry Baur), was originally to have had the dancer Robert Helpmann as Raskolnikov in this version. And those who, ten years ago, relished the rose-garden of Glyndebourne and its chain of sheltered lakes, may revisit these in July, when the little theatre (the best of its kind in the country) will reopen with an opera by Benjamin Britten, in which the misfortunes of Lucrece will be detailed with Roman exactitude; in these days of skimpy, flimsy production, "The Rape of Lucrece," for which ideally thorough preparations are already in hand, is likely to offer that rarest theatrical pleasure—an operatic production which is also a work of art. The stage picture alone (when John Piper has completed it) will justify the journey from London.

Agatha Christie's "Murder on the Nile" (Ambassadors). Did she do it? Jacqueline de Severac is suspected of the murder of her rival for the love of Simon Mostyn. L. to r.—Louise (JACQUELINE ROBERT); *Simon Mostyn* (IAN BRANDT, *at table*); *Father Borrowdale* (DAVID HORNE); *Jacqueline* (VIVIENNE BENNETT); *Dr. Bessner* (HUGO SCHUSTER).

The English Channel is curiously apt to destroy the equilibrium of theatrical companies which venture to cross it, and there were moments during the curtain-raiser of the "BALLETS DES CHAMPS-ELYSÉES" at the Adelphi when it seemed that this youthful and vivacious company had not yet settled down. The orchestra, too, seemed unhappy with its one constantly-repeated tune. But this company has great things behind it—the tradition of Diaghilev, vested in its director Boris Kochno, the assistance of painters such as Picasso, Bérard, Jean Hugo and Marie Laurencin, and some recent music by Stravinsky—who, since he first wrote "The Fire-Bird," has been the commanding musical talent of ballet. His "Jeu de Cartes," with its infinite elasticity of rhythm and its insolently careless use of a small orchestra, formed the second item of the evening. Janine Charrat had given it a choreography which was an intellectual as well as a sensuous pleasure to watch; and Jean Babilée turned the bounding, indefatigable Joker into one of the great bravura parts of ballet. This admirably dry, cool little piece established the company as one which could give a new pleasure to London. It continued with the grand duo from "Swan Lake." There, at least, we have already our own standards of inevitable movement. Irene Skorik did not disturb these in the allegro passages, which need to be as bright and hard as a diamond; but in the opening adagio she gave all the tenderness and all the majesty of the Swan, who is also a Queen, and took us straight to the heart of this fairy-tale. Roland Petit, the company's *maître de ballet*, partnered her with that perfect discretion which is in itself an achievement in classical ballet; and the evening ended with his own "Les Forains." Here the French quality of wit, and that glancing pathos which has endeared to us so many of their films, took over from the more cerebral excitements of "Jeu de Cartes." This little fable of a suburban circus, with its Siamese twins, its sad clown and its Sleeping Beauty, had music by Henri Sauguet in which one could hear, far off, the giant hurdy-gurdies of "Petroushka"; and the audience was rightly bowled over by the galop in which M. Petit, himself a marvel of grace and vigour as the Conjurer, had devised original and delicate movements for Solange Schwarz as the Sleeping Beauty. This ballet enchanted by its Latin quickness; and it introduced to us a very young dancer whose magical high spirits and darting rapidity gave the illusion (a most precious one to ballet-lovers) that she was dancing for her own delight. Hélène



Louise, maid of the bride murdered on the Nile steamboat, is just about to tell what she knows when she is shot herself, in the presence of Dr. Bessner, Miss ffolliot-ffoulkes (HELEN HAYE) *and Father Borrowdale.*

Sadowska performed in "Les Forains" before an audience which included that greatest of all soubrettes, Madame Lydia Lopokova; and she may one day be coupled with her. M. Kochno was unwilling to appear at the end of the evening, but he could have had no doubt that his company was welcome in London, and that he had successfully passed on the authentic shock of the Russian tradition in ballet.

PLAYS YOU MUST SEE: OLD VIC THEATRE COMPANY SEASON OF REPERTORY (New). "PRIVATE LIVES" (Apollo). "WHILE THE SUN SHINES" (Globe). "THE FIRST GENTLEMAN" (Savoy). "UNDER THE COUNTER" (Phœnix). SADLER'S WELLS BALLET SEASON (Covent Garden).

PLAYS WELL WORTH SEEING: "THE YEARS BETWEEN" (Wyndham's). "LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN" (Haymarket). "FOR CRYING OUT LOUD" (Stoll). "PERCHANCE TO DREAM" (Hippodrome). "THE NIGHT AND THE MUSIC" (Coliseum). "THE HASTY HEART" (Aldwych). "NO MEDALS" (Vaudeville). "DUET FOR TWO HANDS" (Lyric). "LADY FROM EDINBURGH" (Playhouse). "SEE HOW THEY RUN" (Comedy). "THE SHOP AT SLY CORNER" (St. Martin's). "IS YOUR HONEYMOON REALLY NECESSARY?" (Duke of York's). "FOLLOW THE GIRLS" (His Majesty's). "MERRIE ENGLAND" (Princes). "FINE FEATHERS" (Prince of Wales). OPERA SEASON (Sadler's Wells). "WORM'S EYE VIEW" (Whitehall). "THE GUINEA-PIG" (Criterion). "A MAN ABOUT THE HOUSE" (Piccadilly). "SONG OF NORWAY" (Palace). "FIFTY-FIFTY" (Strand). "THE SACRED FLAME" (Westminster). "MAKE IT A DATE" (Duchess). "MURDER ON THE NILE" (Ambassadors). "BALLET DES CHAMPS-ELYSÉES" (Adelphi).

While every endeavour is made to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

"THE CAPTIVE HEART" (Odeon) seems to me a fine film that has not quite come off. It was clear that something of the kind had to be attempted sooner or later, by any industry that reckons to take its dramatic materials from the stuff of life. It deals with the problem of our prisoners of war. Beginning with the dreary march back to Germany of British soldiers captured at Dunkirk, it studies the lives of a selected group of men during four years in a prison camp, and ends with their repatriation and homecoming.

There will be few people who can watch this honest British film without being, at moments, strongly moved. Its great virtue lies in the quietness, almost the commonplaceness, of its statement. There is no violence about "The Captive Heart," nor any hate; the conditions of these men are taken for granted, as part of the fortunes of war; there is nothing sensational about their capture, their captivity or their release; the Germans are not shown as particularly monstrous, nor the prison camp as a special hell. The terrible tedium and loneliness of the long days is the chief horror; the arrival of parcels and letters from home the main excitement.

So long as the film sticks to the plain stories of simple types, it succeeds admirably. Basil Radford, for example, as the sporting major who keeps the men's spirits up and their discipline high; Mervyn Johns as the Welsh private tending his rabbits and his vegetables; Jack Warner as the Cockney corporal (what a splendid scene that is, by the way, when *he* goes home); all these people are real and sound, and we are touched and amused and interested by what happens to them. But unhappily some demon of convention seems to have whispered to the producers of "The Captive Heart" that sincerity is not enough. An Important Film, the demon presumably counselled, must have a Beautiful Romance. So they have introduced into this honest picture a wholly artificial story about a Czech fugitive from a concentration camp, who takes the identity of a dead British officer in order to save his own skin, has to keep up a correspondence with the real officer's wife for the same motive, and ends up by falling in love with her photograph and going back to England and marrying her. I do not say that this story has not got a place in *some* film. It is no worse than the sort of romantic nonsense we see nine times out of ten at the pictures. But I do say that it is out of place in an honourable work like "The Captive Heart," and not all Michael Redgrave's skill can give it plausibility.

"Tangier" (Leicester Square Theatre) stars MARIA MONTEZ *as Rita. In the bazaars with her partners she seeks an underworld thug, Balizar; steals a diamond wanted by him. With threats the Governor of Tangier (Preston Foster) discloses to her that he is Balizar; is subsequently killed; while Rita goes off with a newspaper man.*

"The Years Between" (Leicester Square Theatre) is a film version of Daphne du Maurier's play now in its second year at Wyndham's. Above: Wentworth (MICHAEL REDGRAVE) *brings his young bride Diana* (VALERIE HOBSON) *home to the Manor after their wedding. Nanny* (FLORA ROBSON) *stands left.*

One of the films I like best in all the world is revived at Studio One—Duvivier's "LA FIN DU JOUR." There are many solid critical reasons for liking this prince of pictures, but my own delight in it is largely an affair of personal taste. It is all about life in an old actors' home, and I have been fascinated by any story about actors since I was a small girl, and purloined my elder sister's copy of Edna Lyall's "Wayfaring Men."

Let me tempt you with a few memories of "La Fin du Jour." It is, as I say, about a home for retired actors, somewhere in the South of France. Under one charitable roof are gathered the successes, the failures, the have-beens and the never-will-bes of the French stage. In the autumn of their life, with no audience except each other, they still keep on acting. They pore over their old love-letters, and their old Press-cuttings. They bore and delight each other with the old songs. At nights the empty corridors ring with their dreams of the old applause. They quarrel sensationally, and make up with a grand gesture. They are old, they are sly, they are jealous, they are pompous, and they are pitiful. Above all, they are actors.

Into this home of make-believe there comes one man who doesn't fit. He fancies himself an ageless Don Juan. He tries to rekindle the flame of yesterday among the ashes of to-day. He doesn't succeed. The film is the story of his unsuccess. It is a film with a hundred changes and shades of mood; sometimes gay, sometimes bitter, sometimes importunately moving; a film that knocks on the doors of heart and mind. Beautifully played down to the smallest bit, it is one of the screen's great achievements.

A remake of Owen Wister's classic western, "THE VIRGINIAN," has turned up, with California-born Joel McCrea as the Virginian, and Brian Donlevy as the villainous Trampas. The Plaza ought to do nicely with this picture, not only because it is holiday time, but because it is the done thing these days to admire westerns. I wish I could add, because it is a very good western. Unfortunately, I can't. It is a *fairly* good western. The story is fine, the atmosphere pleasantly nostalgic, the acting competent, the direction sketchy, and the Technicolor—to my mind—terrible.

The original "Virginian," as I remember it, had four big moments. There was the scene where the Virginian and his friend changed the labels on the babies at the party; there was the hanging of the three cattle-rustlers; the climax, in which the Virginian and Trampas stalked each other through the streets at sundown; and the encounter in the saloon, when the Virginian challenged Trampas with his famous line, "When you say that, smile."

The present film omits (1); it handles (2) with considerably less power than a corresponding scene in "Strange Incident"; (3) is not a patch on the same sort of climax in "Stagecoach"; (4) will pass muster. . . . I wish we could see the earlier screen version of "The Virginian" again, for I have a pretty clear impression that Gary Cooper and Walter Huston made a better job of the dramatic moments in that picture.

It is a long time since I read James Cain's novel "THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE," but I am under the impression that it made no attempt to woo the reader with any suggestion of sweetness and light. As I recall the book, it was simply a story of an over-sexed young woman and a worthless man who conspire, from simple motives of lust, to murder the woman's husband, a Californian garage proprietor. There were refinements to the story, certainly, with regard to the way fate caught up with this precious pair, but lust was quite honestly the theme.

At the time, "The Postman Always Rings Twice" was thought too tough for Hollywood, and the film was made by the less sensitive French. Now, at last, Hollywood has produced a version, with Lana Turner and John Garfield. In the new, purified "Postman" (Empire) the hero and heroine don't behave quite right, it is true, but they struggle, oh, so hard, against their baser selves.

With Wentworth at the war, Diana amuses herself with Richard; is roundly strafed by Nanny, and takes up politics in a violent way. Her M.P. husband reported missing, she is persuaded to stand for his constituency. His unexpected return causes a flutter; but the finish finds them both M.P.s for different constituencies, and still a united husband and wife.

Mr. Garfield appeals to God. Miss Turner declaims, when attempting to murder her husband in his bath, that she feels like a little girl again, frightened of the dark. Only the machinations of nasty, mean lawyers and policemen stop the lovers from reforming.

ROYAL SEASIDE HOLIDAYS DOWN UNDER.

LADY LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN *and* H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER *were snapped going down to bathe at Palm Beach, New South Wales.*

T.R.H. THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER *had a swim at the picnic lunch-party in honour of the Duke's forty-sixth birthday.*

PRINCE WILLIAM *dashed off on some expedition of his own while* THE DUCHESS *was stooping to help little* PRINCE RICHARD.

THE eight-day visit which ADMIRAL LORD LOUIS and LADY LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN paid to Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney was packed with official functions, but they enjoyed one purely family gathering with their cousins, T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester—a picnic lunch at Palm Beach, New South Wales, in honour of the Duke's forty-sixth birthday. Everyone bathed and enjoyed the lovely warm sun. Our photographs of the young Princes William and Richard of Gloucester were taken during their recent holiday in Tasmania, when they spent a great deal of time on the lovely beaches and in the warm, sparkling sea.

PRINCE RICHARD *is here proudly displaying the shoe which he does not wear when scampering on the beach.*

PRINCE WILLIAM *has found a pebble or shell of high quality and is calling the attention of his parents to this treasure.*

MRS. PECZENIK.

COUNTESS GUROWSKA.

MRS. LOUIS RAWLINGS.

SIX BEAUTIFUL SITTERS FOR COWAN DOBSON.

THESE portraits by COWAN DOBSON are on view in the exhibition of his recent work which opened to the public on April 2 after a crowded private view, and continues until the first week in May, at Frost and Reed's New Bond Street gallery. Mrs. Cowan Dobson is her husband's favourite model, and this new full-length of her was specially painted as the centre-piece of his show. Countess Gurowska is a daughter of Lady Alexandra and Mr. Peter Haig-Thomas, and a niece of Lord Normanton. Lady Buchanan-Jardine is the wife of Sir "Jock" Buchanan-Jardine, Bt., of Castle Milk, and was Miss Prudence A. Haggie. Mrs. William Ogden, who holds a licence to fly, is a composer and lyric writer. She wrote the words and music for "Orchids and Onions" in 1941 under the name of Jayne Ogden. Mrs. Peczenik, who was painted in yellow tulle and red roses to show up her magnolia skin and brown eyes, is Scottish by birth. Mrs. Rawlings is a beautiful Dutch blonde who lived mostly in America before her marriage. The portraits on view also include pictures of H.M. The King of Norway and the Marchioness of Aberdeen.

MRS. WILLIAM OGDEN.

LADY BUCHANAN-JARDINE.

MRS. COWAN DOBSON.

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THE MAN WHO RECLINES AND WALKS ON AIR!

" To walk on air " is a phrase with a sinister meaning, but CHARLY *of the acrobatic act, Adrianne and Charly, has robbed it of anything but wonder.*

And here CHARLY *has leapt with rhythmic grac*
down again as lightly and a

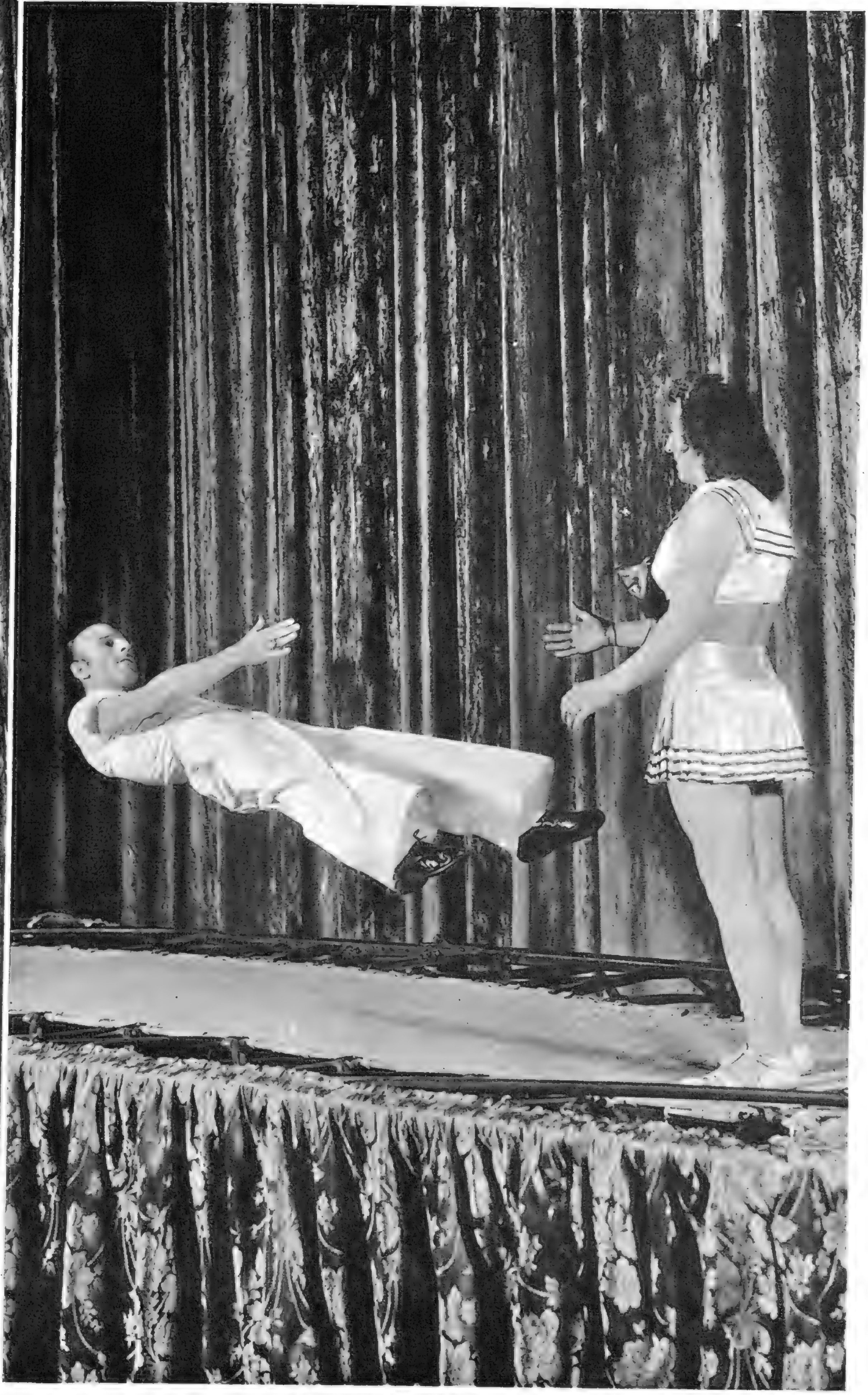
ADRIANNE and CHARLY, who are featu
" Laugh Time," give one of the most a
Charly appears to have completely defeated t
into the air, performing triple somersaults,
completely airborne. He gets his start for ea
but though an integral part of the performanc
steel frame supported by coiled springs. It h
Charly a slight lift—but we cannot promise tha
that he does simply by

N.B. A Coloured plat

LEVITATING AIRBORNE DANCER CHARLY.

he is co..letely airborne. He comes lly as h. went up.

ne Broa..vay vaudeville production, ng acrobatic acts in show business. of gravity, and leaps, and bounces ions and complicated twists when from a device called a trampoline, simply a taut canvas laced over a gh resilience to give Adrianne and r I could manage the levitation acts a trampoline !



And this is how CHARLY *rises from a reclining position to greet his partner,* ADRIANNE. *The speed-ray camera has caught him apparently floating in mid-air.*

serted in this issue.

CAT-AND-DOG LIFE: OR

SONJA HENIE, *blonde ice-skating champion, wanted her pet poodle's teeth to glitter like her own, so she took him to a chic dog salon.*

ELLA RAINES *doesn't see why her golden cocker should not have a manicure like herself . . . minus the red varnish* bien entendu.

THE barking and mewing beaux and belles of the Hollywood colony have a whale of a time in that centre of fabulous luxury. On their pets the film-stars lavish their overflow of affection and lots of attention, and, like them, they are trimmed and shampooed, curled and dressed and beautified in the smart dog salons and cat bureaux which have sprung up in large numbers in the Film City—a flourishing industry backed by shrewd psychologists. There poodles may be trimmed *via* clipper in three different styles, each more startling than the last, but the canine fashion experts decree that all other dogs must keep to one standard turn-out. For the benefit of star cat-lovers, Mrs. Alexander, a former New York model, has set up a "Motel," in which one section is labelled "Maternity Ward," and visitors are asked "Please keep quiet."

SYDNEY GREENSTREET *owns a magnificent Alsatian. He knows a lot of tricks; is gentle and obeys his master's lightest word.*

Knowing the spaniel's proneness to ear-trouble, ESTHER WILLIAMS *has a pair of ear-flaps made for him to wear when she goes swimming. Perhaps they keep his ears out of the food-dish, too.*

HOLLYWOOD STAR-DUST.

he black poodle has been clipped, trimmed, shampooed, pedicured. His owner JOAN BENNETT *held up a mirror to show him how "startled" he looked.*

Film-actress DIANA LYNN *congratulated her Persian cat on a triple dividend when she visited the maternity ward of Hollywood's famous "Motel for Cats," where the happy event took place.*

ESTHER WILLIAMS *demonstrates the efficacy of the plastic ear-flaps as she and her spaniel go for a swim together in a pool.*

Film-star GREGORY PECK *gives a low whistle, and up go the great paws of his Alsatian, reaching nearly to his shoulders.*

DEBUTANTE COUSINS WHO SHARED A DANCE.

MISS ANNE CONSTABLE-MAXWELL, *in the dress which she wore at her coming-out dance, which was attended by Princess Elizabeth.*

A close-up of débutante MISS ANNE CONSTABLE-MAXWELL, *daughter of Wing Commander and Mrs. Gerald Constable-Maxwell.*

MISS ELIZABETH BUXTON, *daughter of Major Anthony and Mrs. Buxton, of Horsey Hall, Great Yarmouth.*

WING COMMANDER and Mrs. Gerald Constable-Maxwell and Major and Mrs. Anthony Buxton gave a joint coming-out dance for their daughters, Miss Anne Constable-Maxwell and Miss Elizabeth Buxton, the other day. Our photographs show the débutantes at the Constable-Maxwells' Hampshire home, Alresford House, where Wing Commander Constable-Maxwell, M.C., D.F.C., A.F.C., runs a watercress farm at which his daughter and his niece work regularly.

This is the dress which MISS ELIZABETH BUXTON *wore at the dance which Mrs. Buxton and Mrs. Constable-Maxwell gave for her and her cousin Anne.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LENARE.

PEP AND GRACE OF "ZIEGFELD FOLLIES."

"ZIEGFELD FOLLIES," new M.G.M. Technicolor production due at the Empire last week, is the gayest, liveliest music-and-dance film imaginable. The programme begins with a review of Ziegfeld's past triumphs given by William Powell and Bunin's Puppets. Then come Fred Astaire, Lucille Ball and Virginia O'Brien in "Bring on the Beautiful Girls." There are plenty of dress thrills, as costumes are designed by Sharaff, and Astaire fans will get a kick out of seeing the one and only Fred wearing a little goatee beard for the number "The Babbit and the Bromide," by George and Ira Gershwin. Judy Garland, Red Skelton and Kathryn Grayson also appear in this lively film.

"Bring on the Beautiful Girls": LUCILLE BALL *and the famous Folly girls.*

Dancing under the sea: ESTHER WILLIAMS *in "A Water-Ballet."*

FRED ASTAIRE *and* GENE KELLY *wear little goatee beards in "The Babbit and the Bromide."*

FRED ASTAIRE *and* LUCILLE BREMER *in "Limehouse Blues," a dramatic pantomime with music by Philip Braham.*

SERIOUS PIG-TAILED STARLET.

Julie (MAUREEN O'HARA) *meets sensitive, dreamy little Hitty* (CONNIE MARSHALL), *and decides to adopt her; an early sequence in* "SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY."

Julie, who has long been suffering from a weak heart, dies in the arms of her husband, Bill (JOHN PAYNE). *Hitty, the adopted child, is overcome with grief.*

Widower Bill returns home to find that Hitty is trying her best to do everything as Julie used to do it. When she plays Julie's favourite song record it's too much for him.

Hitty, feeling that she is not wanted by Bill, has run away and been brought back after an anxious search. Bill and Donelly (WILLIAM BENDIX) *make her promise to stay at home in future.*

CONNIE MARSHALL, *new little pig-tailed starlet, has some graceful and amusing sequences with her playthings and her woolly pet dog.*

"SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY" (Odeon, Leicester Square, April 26) is the sob-stuff story of Julie, childless wife of Bill, and the girl Hitty whom she adopts. She teaches Hitty that she must look after Bill if her (Julie's) weak heart should conk out. This distressing event occurs, and Hitty does her best to carry on. Bill finds this imitation of his late wife more than he can bear, and Hitty runs away. Too late, Bill realises that he wants—he needs—Hitty . . . but happily it is not too late after all.

CONNIE MARSHALL *has a childish gravity which is not her least attraction. This study of her at work on her pet dog's toilet gives a good idea of her charm.*

RITA HAYWORTH IN A "FIERY-BRILLIANT MODERN MELODRAMA."

"GILDA," *new Columbia picture due at the New Gallery and Tivoli on April 21, gives* RITA HAYWORTH *a great part as the wife of Ballin Mundsen* (GEORGE MACREADY), *owner of a Buenos Aires gambling casino.*

Gilda (RITA HAYWORTH) *is a mysterious and seductive woman. She marries Mundsen and finds that his best friend and trusted lieutenant is her former boy-friend, Johnny Farrell, who ran out on her before she married.*

"GILDA," due for its European première on April 21 at the Tivoli and the New Gallery, gives Rita Hayworth, successful star of screen musicals, a chance to show what she can do in quite a different type of picture—a "fiery-brilliant modern melodrama," to quote Synopsis. She plays a beautiful girl who comes to Buenos Aires as the wife of Mundsen, and finds that her husband's chief assistant is a man who left her in the lurch some years back. She now hates this man, Johnny Farrell, and means to be revenged on him, and, according to the official description, "the conflict arising from the clash of these forceful personalities is tense, torrid and thrillingly different entertainment." To add more interest to the action, Mundsen fakes a sham suicide in order to further his peculiar business interests.

Gilda goes to the Mardi Gras carnival with Johnny Farrell (GLENN FORD), *but leaves early with another man in order to annoy her former lover.*

While singing her song, "Put the Blame on Mame, Boys," Gilda invites men in the audience to help her in her strip-tease act.

Gilda has married the proprietor of a gambling casino in Buenos Aires, and she enters into the life of the place with tremendous gusto. Sometimes she wins a packet.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

"THE KING'S GENERAL" is an historical novel—a blend of fact and fiction, as Miss Daphne du Maurier calls it—whose subject is the Civil War in Cornwall. Cornwall, my readers will not need reminding, was always staunchly Royalist, and Miss du Maurier's hero, Sir Richard Grenvile, grandson of another, better-known Sir Richard, was the King's General in the West. As she portrays him, he is a man of the type of Mr. Rochester, as forcible in his methods with women as with the enemy on the field; but Honor Harris, who tells the story, found his rudeness and his shock-tactics captivating. She would have married him but for a cruel accident; the more cruel because his sister, the poisonous man-eater Gartred, might have prevented it. So she sent him away and remained on her bed or wheeled about in her chair, a helpless cripple.

But she could not keep him away. Fifteen years later, married and separated and the father of two children, he returns to her, and during the troubled years of the Civil War is never long absent from her. Time has not softened him; he is as cruel to his weakling son as Heathcliff was to his. Brave as a lion, and the mainstay of the King's cause in Cornwall, he will none the less alienate the sympathy of most readers; for he stands out as a cruel man in a war that was not, compared with most wars, inhumane. Miss du Maurier does not sentimentalise his portrait, and its credibility is the reward of her integrity.

The Secret Room.

The war in Cornwall was a confused affair of shifting fortunes, and the plot of the book takes after it. Twice Honor is bundled out of her brother-in-law's house, in flight from the Commonwealth forces who have sacked or are about to sack it. Various landmarks stand out: the mutual love of Richard and Honor, Gartred's hatred of her sister-in-law, and, in the domain of the concrete, the secret chamber which played such an important, and eventually such a tragic rôle in the ill-fated annals of the Cornishmen's resistance. Miss du Maurier has a sure instinct for drama, and of this secret chamber, well-worn property of adventure stories though it be, she makes the most. When it is named, our hearts beat faster.

The ROYAL ACADEMY SELECTION COMMITTEE *have now got down to their task of deciding which of the hundreds of works submitted for exhibition will be shown in the first post-war Royal Academy. Here they are at their initial meeting. The President,* SIR ALFRED J. MUNNINGS, *is seated in the centre, and the group includes* MR. A. H. THOMAS, R.A., MR. HENRY RUSHBURY, R.A., *and* MR. CHARLES CUNDALL, R.A., MR. RODRIGO MOYNIHAN, A.R.A., MR. EDWARD LE BAS, A.R.A., MR. A. F. HARDIMAN, A.R.A., *and* MR. MAURICE LAMBERT, A.R.A. *(with pipe), the sculptor.*

Symbolism in Literature.

Poetry has always dealt in symbols, but the tendency of prose literature has been to discard them, as childish modes of expression cramping to mature thought. With a few exceptions — Emily Brontë, Hawthorne, Hermann Melville—the novelists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries left symbolism alone. Events bear their face value or are used to illustrate character; they have no significance beyond that.

But latterly, perhaps because psycho-analysts have found in symbols the key to certain mental states, perhaps also as a result of the war, which has led people to look for an inner meaning in events apparently meaningless, symbolism has returned to literature. Kafka was the apostle of a school, and Mr. William Sansom is one of his most distinguished disciples.

The Firemen and the Cat.

There are only three stories in his new book, but they are of high quality and much more coherent than was his earlier volume, "Fireman Flower." Also the first two have a quality which the other book rather noticeably lacked: humour. There is no reason why symbolists should be devoid of humour, but the fact remains that they often are; all the more welcome, therefore, are those fragments of dialogue about the bus-routes—so boring in themselves, so amusing in their context—that enliven "The Cleaner's Story." Oblivious of the hubbub round them, the collective indignation, the rival theories of what is to be done with "the Annexe" when the townspeople get hold of it, the two men continue their argument, each trying to prove himself right. In themselves all the conversations are trivial, and one feels that next day no one will mind what happens to the Annexe; but they do, for the moment, employ the whole will and consciousness of the participants—just as, in the second story, a very brief one, the enterprise of rescuing the cat in the tree occupies all the energies of the firemen. Here, too, we find delightful humour and a confident, early-morning spirit of adventure. "A trick of the weather has transformed the street, the hour, life. Perhaps this trick is a more powerful agent than the liver or even the libido. Perhaps one day it will be agreed that the most critical words of all are—'good morning.'" Everything the firemen set eyes on gleams and glistens with freshness; no one grudges the cat the expense and trouble it has given; indeed, they all try to stroke it as it marches proudly and unconcernedly away. Here is a glimpse of human nature at its gayest and happiest; and how flat is the homecoming, with the rescue accomplished, and nothing to look forward to but the dull routine of the day! Mr. Sansom has isolated the moment of heightened consciousness, the instant of self-forgetfulness so intense as to be almost self-annihilating, that every human being craves. At his best he can portray someone acting not merely from the surface of his mind, but from every stratum of his personality.

In the last story he neglects surface impressions for what lies beneath, and it is as though a painter tried to depict the sea by painting the seaweed at the bottom—a mistake, for we can infer much more from what the physical eye rests on than we can from what the mind's eye, however imaginative and perceptive, conjures up. Feet are revealing; but you can tell more about a man by looking at his face.

Slight as its contents are, the power and originality of "Three" make one entertain the liveliest hopes of this writer's future.

Bursts of Speed.

Mr. Gerald Kersh's short stories are really short. Many of them say their say in three or four pages. The breakneck pace of this literary sprinting necessitates the rejection of superfluous weight or adornment. Even Mr. William Saroyan, another past-master of the short cut, would be left behind by Mr. Kersh. Often the stories are told by a narrator to a listener whose function is to listen and be surprised; thus they have the characteristics of the spoken anecdote, meant to engage one's attention by hook or by crook, rather than those of the written word. Yet they are very well-written, in a high-powered journalistic style that suits the fantastic incidents and the red-blooded heroes from Central Europe who tell them—or some of them. "Neither Man Nor Dog" is not a book for reflective or continuous reading; but as a literary apéritif or pick-me-up it could hardly be bettered.

A Husband-Killer.

Readability is not a quality much prized by modernist critics. They seek rather for "ruthless realism" or "a keen realisation of contemporary values." It is a pity: only genius can risk being hard to read. This is all the more reason to welcome "Bedelia." It is before all things readable; an American version of the psychological thriller. For the first half it stands up well enough to these formidable competitors. The atmosphere is delightfully sinister, the murderess heroine—so devoted a wife apparently, and yet with something sub-human about her—is an original figure. After the middle, however, Miss Vera Caspary loses grip, and strains probability to the point at which the illusion, necessary to hold the reader spellbound, is threatened. All the same, up to the end we are never bored.

Crime and Cosiness.

"Fire in the Thatch" is not boring either. But it is different; a steady, competent example of the cosy, English-style detective-story. The setting is cosy: soft, lush, Devonshire countryside, full of cows and ancient traditions. Mr. Lorac's characters, most of them, are cosy too: kindly squire, healthy, amiable squire's daughter, sterling rustics. Only a discontented London beauty yearning for night-clubs, and some shady interlopers out to exploit the countryside to make money, strike a jarring note. And they are satisfactorily defeated. It is true that murder is committed, but that only adds a touch of welcome excitement to the tranquil harmony of the scene.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

The King's General. By Daphne du Maurier. (*Gollancz; 9s. 6d.*)
Three. By William Sansom. (*Hogarth Press; 8s. 6d.*)
Neither Man Nor Dog. By Gerald Kersh. (*Heinemann; 8s. 6d.*)
Bedelia. By Vera Caspary. (*Eyre and Spottiswoode; 8s. 6d.*)
Fire in the Thatch. By F. C. R. Lorac. (*Collins; 8s. 6d.*)

Pin-up Girl: No. 50. Pamela May.

BALLERINA PAMELA MAY *of the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company, is dancing leading rôles at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. With Margot Fonteyn she alternates in the part of Princess Aurora in "The Sleeping Beauty," the company's new, ambitious and successful production. Pamela first emerged from the corps de ballet in 1934, in the pas de trois in "Swan Lake." In 1937 she had the part of the Red Queen in "Checkmate" to Robert Helpmann's King. Her performance in "Horoscope" stamped her as an artist of importance and individuality.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY GORDON ANTHONY.

THE GUILTY PAIR.*

By NORAH BURKE.

IT began when she called her husband the wrong name by mistake. He took it very well at the time, and one way and another she managed to elude the subject until next morning. But then———

"Who," he asked, "is this chap called Bill?"

They were having drinks in the Yacht Club at the time, waiting for the tide. Getting to know each other again after four war years apart.

Brewer's Tudor windows presented a view of East Coast estuary behind them, with herring-gulls walking on dazzling mud. Hundreds of sailing-boats, too, in their mud berths, with plank paths going out to them, and some gone green where they lay.

"I know dozens of Bills! Cigarette, please. Did you ever try Cyprus? I like them, and you could get them when everything else was off. Some people say you must smoke five hundred before you really appreciate them, but I——"

The cigarette topic lasted well. She was still at ease, not cornered yet, though she wished someone that they knew would come in. And pretty soon they'd be sailing to Scofer's Island, and not getting back till next tide. Midnight. Mike painted wild birds; he wanted to see the duck come in. She'd be alone with him twelve hours. Be all right in the boat, of course, and plenty to think of, sailing, but that wouldn't last for ever. Still, she wasn't frightened yet, although he was staring at her.

"What's the matter? My hair coming down?" she asked.

But it wasn't; it never did. Not even in a wind, on this maddening woman. Jonny had masses of long, gold hair, having seen before anyone else did that long hair was coming back; and she wore it like a fez. She lived in London, you could see at a glance, but she wasn't stupid about it.

For instance, although at the moment the foot on the bar of the bar had a red clomp sandal on it, she'd got old grey gym shoes in the back of the car, for sailing, and a nice, dirty raincoat. Matter of fact, the only satisfactory thing a woman could notice about this woman was that she was too tall. So she'd got no business to do her hair that way, or wear shoes like that.

"You may know dozens of Bills, darling, but which one was this that you mistook me for?"

"I tell you, it was just a slip of the tongue."

"I dare say! But——"

"Oh, good! Look, here are the Doyles."

So it was all right for a bit. Till the tide was over the oyster-beds, and Mike parking the car at the top of the Hard. Till they were in the boat, and the sun very hot, and the wind very cold, getting through her white cable-stitch sweater and making the little hairs on her arms stand up. White scimitar of sail slicing the blue sky. All right till they were on Scofer's Island even, and the boat tied up in a creek where she could lie stranded till the tide came chuckling back.

"And now, young woman——"

"Mike, what heavenly mud! Look, I've got black satin gloves on! Long ones. I'm sure Lady Hamilton or somebody used to wear gloves like this, but they never fitted so well as mine. *Dar*ling, I love you, I want to hug you!"

"Wash, you horrible woman! And then tell me——"

"This grass," she said, "is gathered and sent to Manchester, I think, and pickled, and you used to be able to buy it in bottles for cocktail parties, d'you remember? Try it. It's lovely." Crisp, salty snap-stems, with the tide just off them, and she'd eaten it in town at ten shillings a time.

"Listen——" he began.

"I'm going to sun-bathe. I'm going to let down my hair at you. After that, I shall probably go to sleep."

Behind the dyke wall, they were out of the wind, and the sun blazing. Sea-grasses—you could cut yourself on some of them—bound the wall together, holding the loose white sand. Larks and pipits were notes in the sky.

He said, "I like that white bathing-suit, and your skin so brown and your hair so gold. You look nice with it down."

"I know. That's why I do it."

"Did Bill think so too?"

"It wasn't as long as it is now." The moment the words were out she saw what she'd done. Slipping up, like any other woman, on a bit of flattery like a banana-skin. Enjoying her hair, and now look.

After a bit he said, "There *was* a special Bill, then?"

A thousand blisters.

"Oh, well, I went about a bit with a chap called Bill Somers, but it didn't amount to anything, and it was ages ago."

"What d'you call going about a bit?"

"He was nice—I liked him. I suppose he's a major or something by now, but then he was a second lieutenant. Very young, really. He talked about his mother, and that's a certain sign a man's not married."

"Why—oh, why, will a woman never answer a question direct? I said 'What d'you call going about a bit?'"

"I'm coming to that. He was stationed near us, and we used to go out for drinks when there was anywhere open. And sometimes there was a dance."

"In fact, you went about together a lot?"

"Well, why not? Everyone did."

"You never mentioned him in your letters."

"Why should I? I'm one adult person, and you're another. Must we keep a log of everything we do?"

"Were you in love with Bill?"

"Not like I love you."

"Hadn't I better hear the story?"

He was sort of smiling, so she was suddenly tempted to go ahead. She was up to the chin in this bog already, so she might as well flounder through to the other side.

"There's not much to tell," she began. "I suppose I was flattered by his attention. You know. He stood and stared at me in the bar of the Crown, and made an excuse to come and order drinks right by me and that. After checking up that the stare wasn't due to a zip undone or anything, I made sure I was Cleopatra at least. It was a fearfully hot night, and I wanted to go bathing after the Crown shut. Most of the others thought it wasn't hot enough to go to those lengths, but someone knew Bill and thought he would, so they called him over and naturally he said yes. It's funny the little things one remembers. I said 'Really go in the water?', and he said 'I don't mean a dry shampoo.'"

"So you went on a midnight swimming-party alone, then?"

"But it was absolutely platonic. Damn it, I'd only just met the lad!"

"If any man could take you on a midnight swim and keep it platonic, he must be suffering from some very serious complaint!"

"I wonder if the boat's all right?" She escaped up the ridge to see. At the top the wind caught her, but she was still hot enough from the sun to stand it. She looked nice, up high against the sky like that in her white suit, and the wind holding her long hair out like a harp. Quite unconscious of it all: only a woman could have seen that she knew perfectly well how nice she looked.

The boat was now sitting among green fields, far from the fallen tide, but everything was all right, unfortunately, and Jonny couldn't stand the wind any longer. She had to go back.

She sat down on a sandy towel by him, drew up her knees and rested her arms on them, and her head on her arms. Her hair hid her face, and she looked at him through the dark, rich gold without his knowing it. He didn't look cross, and she began to take heart. Began, actually, to be not so frightened after all.

Until he said suddenly, "Have you given me cause to divorce you, Jonny?"

She was so long thinking of something to say that he put a hand out and pushed her hair away. "How can you stand all this stuff on your face?" He curled his fingers in it and held her so she couldn't look away. And "*Have you?*" he demanded.

"Please don't divorce me, Mike."

"Why not?"

"Because I love you. There's always been only you. Like that, I mean. I never thought myself in love with Bill. But, you see, he loved me and I felt sorry for him, and I was missing you so terribly. You've no idea what it was like. He might have been killed, or you, or I, and I just felt what the hell does anything matter any more? Oh, I know it's a rotten excuse, but that's how it was."

"When did you last see Bill?"

"Four years ago. He wanted me to divorce you and marry him, but I wouldn't. And he was in a marrying mood—he married someone else soon afterwards."

"And you?"

"There was no one else, if that's what you mean. I'd learnt my lesson. The whole thing can be awfully disappointing. Not like you imagine it a bit. Besides," she couldn't help a twinkle, "he called the waitress 'Miss.'"

There was silence, and suddenly she began to go cold and colder; began to realise what she had done and what she had admitted, and what she stood to lose, the chase and capture of her guilt completed. She began to feel like a rat in a hole, hearing spades.

Her last idiotic words were still hanging in the air like smoke-rings—"he called the waitress 'Miss.'"

"Mine," said Mike suddenly, "had fat knees."

And first she didn't understand, and then she did, and next moment they were both laughing. Laughing.

"Oh, Mike! *Mike!* Why didn't you tell me? May your eyeballs rot, sweetheart. Why didn't you tell me?"

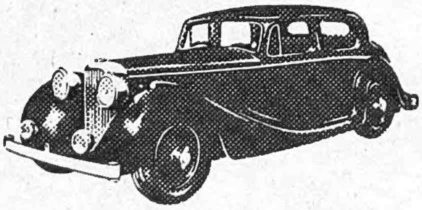
"I didn't dare till I was sure about you!"

It was two in the morning when they came home, the tide crinkling—brilliant phosphorescence among the old oyster-shells and barbed wire and milk-tins alongside the Hard. They came arm-in-arm up the Hard, stepping over the bits where the concrete was fallen in and not yet repaired, and they got into the car and went home. A guilty pair.

[THE END.

* *All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

Jaguar



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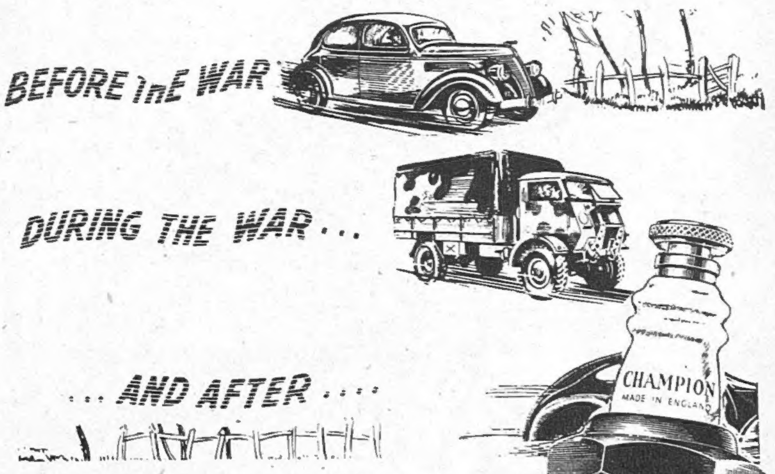

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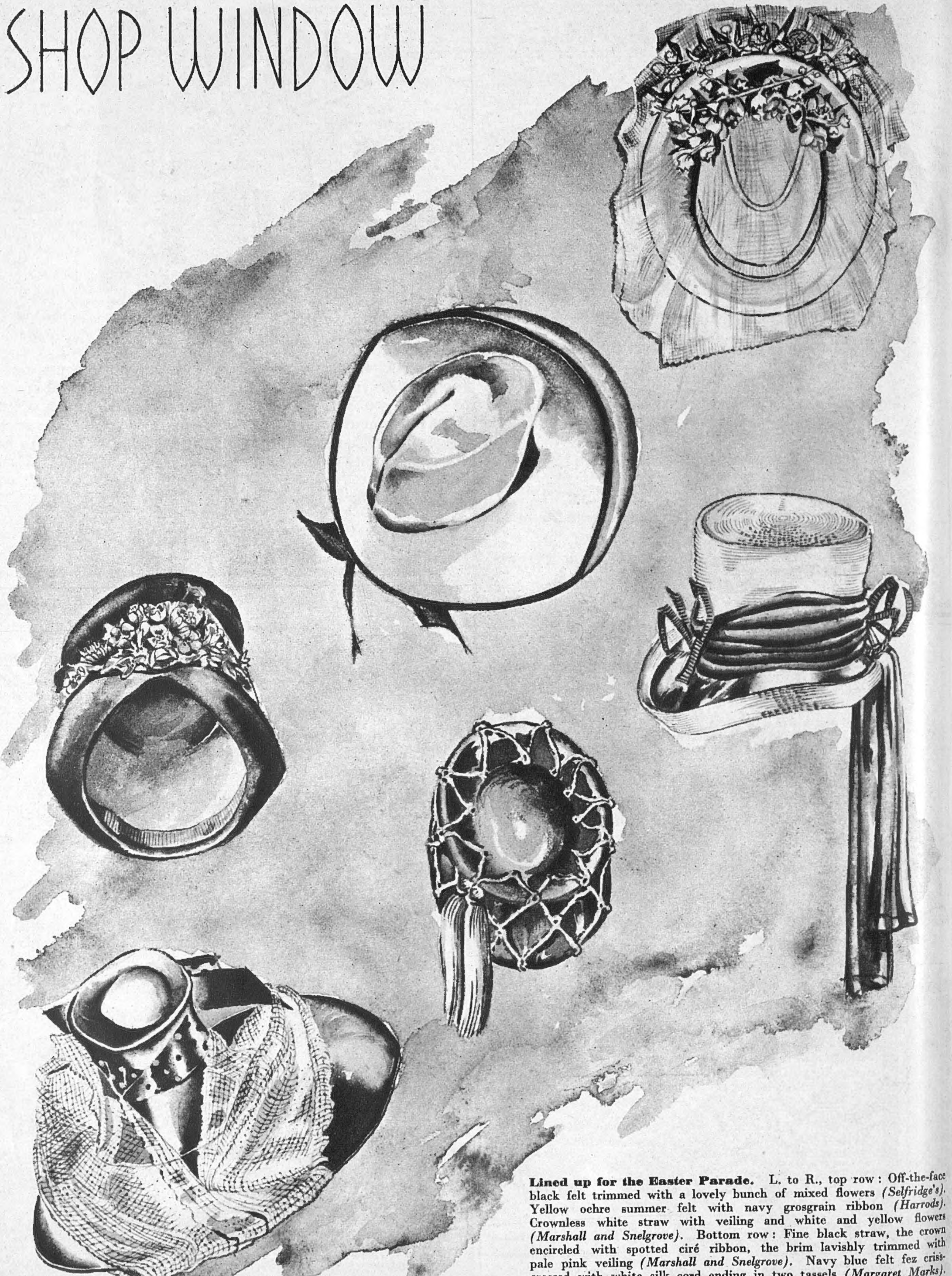

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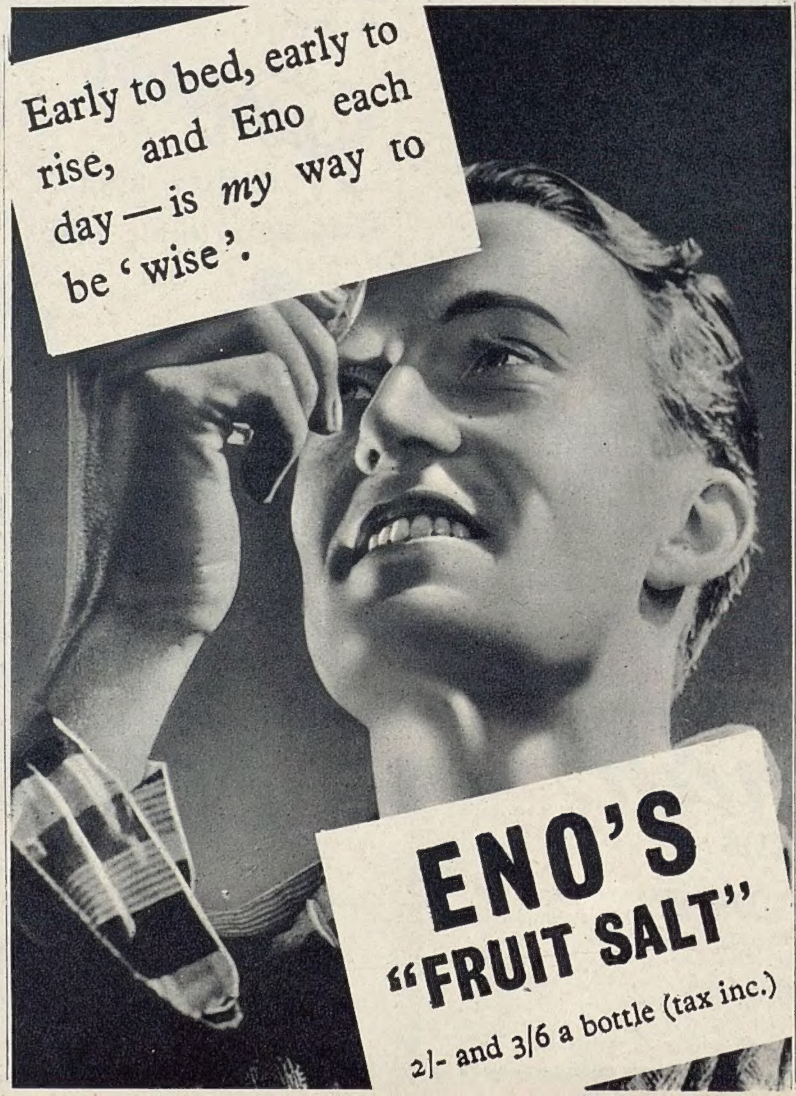

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